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Letter dated 31 May 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 17 May 2016 from the President of the Central African Republic, Faustin Archange Touadera (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) BAN Ki-moon

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Annex to the letter dated 31 May 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: French]

Allow me first to express my profound gratitude, and that of my people, to the United Nations and to the wider international community for their exceptional mobilization to assist the Central African Republic throughout the transition, which began in 2013. It is clear that without that commitment, in particular, the action of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the unprecedented violence that plagued our society and severely undermined its social cohesion could have toppled the Republic, with immeasurable consequences for the country and the region at large. I am most grateful for your personal involvement and the interest that you have always shown for my country.

With the successful conclusion of the transition process, and particularly the holding of transparent and credible presidential and legislative elections, we are entering a new phase that is just as crucial for the future of my country. The aim is to consolidate the progress made during the transition, strengthen national cohesion and reconciliation, and work towards balanced socioeconomic development to benefit all regions of the country and its various population groups, guaranteeing lasting peace and stability. To attain these objectives, the ongoing commitment of the international community alongside the Central African Republic is essential. I would like to assure you that I, along with the entire Government of the Central African Republic, am determined to spare no effort in taking up the immense challenges facing our country and to turn the page on our turbulent past. We are fully aware of the important role we have to play in this regard. Without strong national leadership, the support of the international community will not bear the expected fruit.

Since my assumption of office and the formation of the Government, one of my priorities has been disbanding the armed groups that are active in various areas of the Central African Republic. Their presence and activities prolong the insecurity that affects primarily civilians, hinder efforts to repair the social fabric and impede the restoration of State authority and the exercise of its sovereign prerogatives, including tax collection. They also make it impossible to translate the dividends of peace and socioeconomic recovery into real benefits on the ground, compounding the threat to the security and stability of the region at a time when it is faced with serious security issues.

For this reason, I took the initiative to engage directly with representatives of these armed groups, appealing to their sense of responsibility and urging them to commit genuinely to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and to pursue their demands through peaceful means. I indicated to them my willingness to enter into discussions, at the earliest opportunity, to agree on the parameters and procedures for resolving the matter with full respect for the rule of law and the institutions freely established by the people of the Central African Republic. I am convinced that the solution to the issue of armed groups must be comprehensive in addressing all aspects of the problem. My Government and I are committed to attacking the root causes of the crisis in our country, including the political and socioeconomic demands of armed groups and the elements thereof. No effort will be spared in this regard. At the same time, the rule of law must prevail and democratic

legitimacy must be maintained throughout the country. It is only thus that the Central African Republic can successfully meet the many challenges that still hamper its march towards greater justice and shared wealth.

In this regard, I cannot overemphasize the importance and urgency surrounding the support of the international community. It is my fervent hope that the partners of the Central African Republic, as they continue their unfailing support for the transition process, can impress upon the various politico-military groups the urgent need to restore State authority and urge them to commit fully to the dialogue that I have initiated. By taking a public and coordinated stance, the country's partners, including the United Nations, would send a clear message that the international community is determined to bring its weight to bear in resolving the question of armed groups. The speedy conclusion of efforts undertaken will create the conditions for the success of the donor conference planned for November 2016 to mobilize the much-needed resources for the socioeconomic recovery of the Central African Republic. It is my hope that during my upcoming visit to New York in early June, you will allow me the opportunity, despite the pressing demands on your time, to share with you, in person, my vision for my country, especially with regard to the disbanding of armed groups. I would be grateful if you would bring this letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the United Nations Security Council for their information and action as required.

I would like to inform you that I have addressed similar letters to the Economic Community of Central African States, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the African Union and the European Union.

Bangui, 17 May 2016

(*Signed*) Dr. Faustin-Archange **Touadéra**